

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 07976 112032Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-11 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 OMB-01 PM-05 OES-07 SP-02 SS-15
STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 PA-01 SSM-03 IO-13 /123 W
-----079182 112036Z /14

O 112019Z MAR 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6588
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 07976

TEL AVIV FOR CHARGE VIETS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, PBOR, IS, EG, US
SUBJECT: AMOCO INCIDENT

REF: (A) CAIRO 7970, (B) STATE 63387

1. SINCE FONMIN SAID HE WOULD NEED SEVERAL HOURS TO CONSULT COLLEAGUES, AMBASSADOR CALLED HIM AGAIN 2145 LOCAL THIS EVENING TO ASK WHAT DECISION GOE HAD REACHED. KAMEL SAID HE HAD CONSULTED HIS COLLEAGUES IN MFA (UNNAMED, BUT PROBABLY GHALI AND LEGAL COUNSELOR NABIL ELARABY). THEY WERE TOTALLY OPPOSED TO AMOCO REP TALKING TO ISRAELIS. AMOCO, KAMEL SAID, COULD NOT DO SO WITH GOE APPROVAL. AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT, THERE IS NO DISPUTE ABOUT COORDINATES WHERE RIG IS LOCATED. THE POINT IS, HE CONTENTED, THAT IF AMOCO, WHICH IS AN AGENT OF GOE, DISCUSSES SUBJECT WITH ISRAELI REPRESENTATIVES, AS WE SUGGEST, IT MUST BE VIS-A-VIS SOMETHING, I.E, ISRAELI-CLAIMED MEDIAN LINE WHICH EGYPT DOES NOT ACCEPT. IT WOULD IN EFFECT BE AN INDIRECT ACCEPTANCE BY AN EGYPTIAN
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AGENT THAT A MEDIAN LINE EXISTS. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, HE COULD NOT AGREE TO OUR PROPOSAL.

2. I PRESSED HIM HARD TO RECONSIDER THE MATTER, NOTING THAT IN OUR VIEW AMOCO REP COULD SIT WITH ISRAELI REP WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO GOE (OR OUR) LEGAL POSITION RE MEDIAN LINE. IT WAS A SENSIBLE WAY TO DEFUSE WHAT COULD

BE A DANGEROUS SITUATION. AMOCO PRESIDENT IN CAIRO WAS WILLING TO DO SO IF GOE AGREES. KAMEL WOULD NOT BUDGE. HE WOULD NOT AGREE TO HAVE AMOCO REP TALK TO ISRAELIS WITH GOE APPROVAL.

3. SO FAR AS THE AMOCO RIG IS CONCERNED, KAMEL SAID, IT DOES NOT MATTER TO HIM WHETHER IT OPERATES OR NOT. IF IT IS PHYSICALLY FORCED OUT OF ITS LOCATION BY THE ISRAELIS, THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ISRAELIS. HE WONDERED WHETHER ISRAELIS ARE SEEKING TO CREATE AN INCIDENT ON THE EVE OF THE BEGIN VISIT TO WASHINGTON. SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE RIG, KAMEL OPINED, WILL HAVE TO BE PLAYED OUT ON THE GROUND TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS. IT WAS KAMEL'S FIRM UNDERSTANDING THAT RIG IS IN GULF OF SUEZ WATERS WEST OF ISRAELI-CLAIMED MEDIAN LINE.

4. I THEN CALLED AMOCO PRESIDENT RUBASH TO INFORM HIM OF KAMEL'S POSITION, NOTING IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT KAMEL HAD NOT DISCUSSED IT WITH MINPET AHMED HILAL. I WONDERED IF RUBASH MIGHT WISH TO DO SO. RUBASH NOTED THAT THE IDEA DOES NOT ORIGINATE WITH AMOCO, HENCE HE DID NOT FEEL HE COULD CALL HILAL ON THE SUBJECT. RUBASH IS PERFECTLY PREPARED TO ALLOW THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND TO BE PLAYED OUT BY THE PARTICIPANTS ON THE SPOT. HE HAD HEARD NOTHING FURTHER FROM THE RIG SINCE INFO
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REPORTED PARA 4 REF A AND DOUBTED THAT HE WOULD HAVE ANYTHING UNTIL TOMORROW.

5. WOULD BE HELPFUL KNOW IF DEPT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH AMOCO HEADQUARTERS IN CHICAGO, WHICH APPARENTLY HAS EXCELLENT COMMUNICATIONS WITH RUBASH IN CAIRO AND WHICH REGULARLY INSTRUCTS HIM ON WHAT ACTIONS HE SHOULD TAKE.
EILTS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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